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Participant in raid says two arrested were involved

LOS ANGELES (AP) — A former Green Beret and the daughter of a U.S. pilot shot down during the Vietnam War who were arrested in Thailand worked on an abortive mission to rescue U.S. servicemen allegedly held in Laos, a member of the mission said yesterday.

Charles Patterson, another former Green Beret, also said the CIA and the Defense Intelligence Agency were behind the arrests of Lynn Standerwick, 25, and Lance Edward Trimmer, 43.

Thai authorities said the two, who have been released from custody, have pleaded not guilty to a charge of possessing a high-powered radio transmitter. They are to appear in court tomorrow.

Patterson said Ms. Standerwick and Trimmer worked for former Green Beret Lt. Col. James "Bo" Gritz, who led Patterson, two other Americans and a group of Laotian anti-Communists on the foiled raid in November.

Ms. Standerwick and Trimmer were arrested Sunday in a rented house in Nakhon Phanom, a border town 450 miles northeast of Bangkok.

"Lance was radio operator on the last operation [in November] and Lynn was a POW daughter who was helping on communications in the last operation," Patterson said in a telephone interview from his father's home in Dinuba, Calif.

He said Ms. Standerwick worked on the operation in the United States.

Trimmer told the Thais he was a tourist. Ms. Standerwick said she was a representative of an international Boy Scout agency, but a Boy Scouts of America spokesman, Raul Chavez in Irving, Texas, denied knowledge of her.

Ms. Standerwick's father, Air Force Col. Robert L. Standerwick, was shot down Feb. 7, 1971. He was never found.

Patterson said Trimmer, a private detective in Sonoma, Calif., had served with him in the Special Forces under Gritz for two years in the late 1960s.

In an earlier interview, Gritz — who is reportedly in Southeast Asia planning another rescue mission — said the women manned a Washington "safe house" where they monitored teletype messages from Gritz in Laos via a radio relay point in Nakhon Phanom.

Patterson blamed the CIA and the DIA for the ambush that ended the mission as well as the arrests of Ms. Standerwick and Trimmer because they don't want to find soldiers who have been declared dead.

"Why dig up a can of worms and have to pay all these families money that's owed them?" Patterson said. "It's easier to declare the man dead, pay the \$10,000 [death benefit], forget about him."

U.S. officials maintain that

private rescue missions are interfering with government attempts to learn about POWs and MIAs.